(iii) re—alleged irregularites in preparation of the list of the voters in Belgaum City.

SRI B.B. SAYANAK (Belgaum).—I call the attention of the Minister for Law and Municipal Administration to the alleged irregularities in the preparation of the new list of voters in Belgaum City.

SRI D.K. NAIKAR (Minister for Law and Municipal Administration).— I would like to make the following statement:

In pursuance of the directions of the Election Commission of India, the electoral rolls of the entire State were taken up for revision from 1-1-1975 under a crash programme.

A programme of the revision is placed below for kind reference·

As per the programme, house-to-house enumeration of voters was done from 1-1-1975 to 16-1-1975. Simultaneously with this, the existing rolls were published in draft on 1-1-1975 after collation in terms of the 224 newly delimited Assembly Constituencies from 1-1-1975 to 16-1-1975, and claims and objections were called for.

Both Kannada and Marathi knownig enumerators were appointed for enumeration of voters. There appears however to have been a delay of 3 or 4 days in appointing Marathi enumerators

On the basis of the house-to-house enumeration, the statements of additions, corrections and deletions were prepared and exhibited from 25-1-1975 to 1-2-1975. These statements were also prepared in Kannada and Marathi. One official of the office of the Tahsildar, Belgaum, was also specially entrusted with the duty of assisting the public in tracing out their names in the electoral rolls. The bonafide intention behind this was to facilitate the quick tracing out of the names by the public. If Marathi house were admitted by the enumerators, as alleged by Shri Sayanak, it was open for the concerned persons to put in their claims, as for this very purpose only the lists of addition corrections, and deletions were publised.

In response to the publication of draft rolls from 1-1-1975 to 16-1-1975 and publication of lists of additions, carrections and deletions from 25-1-1975 to 1-2-1975 from Belgaum and Uchagaon Assembly Constituencies 226 claim applications and 3073 objections to the inclusion of names on the ground of age being doubtful were received by the Tahsildar, Belgaum Taluk.

At the time of the visit of the Chief Electoral Officer to Belgaum in last week of January Shri Sayanak brought to his notice several cases of Marathi houses not enumerated. The Chief Electoral Officer brought this to the notice of the District Election Officer for immediate action and subsequently it is learnt these houses have been enumerated and the persons included in the rolls.

According to the programme, the claims and objections were required to be disposed of by 10-2-1975. The Tahsildar, Belgaum reported that in view of the large number of objections received, the notices were required to be issued to the objectors and the persons, the inclusion of whose names were objected to and requested that the time allowed for disposal of claims and objections may be extended from 10-2-1975 to 15-2-1975 in respect of Belgaum, Uchagaon and Bagewadi constituencies which was granted.

The Tahsildar has since reported that none of the objectors have produced any evidence in support of their objections in response to the notices. They merely contended that they doubted the ages of 3073 persons proposed to be included in the rolls and that verification of ages should be made before the names were included.

In response to the notices only 167 defendents produced proofs regarding their ages and their names will be continued in the rolls. In respect of the remaining 2906 objections, neither the obectoes nor the defendent did turn up for the hearing and no documentary evidence was therefore available. The Thasildar has in the circumstances proposed to reject all the said objections.

Sri. B.B Sayanak has alleged that 20 Congress workers have colluded with the Tahsildar's Office in filing objections to the inclusion of names of Marathi speaking persons. The Assistant Commissioner, Belgaum Sub-division who is the Electoral Registration Officer has denied these allegations and stated that he was duty-bound to receive objections irrespective of the fact that objectors were Kannada speaking or Marathi speaking.

The Assistant Commissioner, Belgaum Sub-division held a meeting of the political parties, in his office on 31-1-1975 and explained to them the salient features of the revision and sought their co-operation in making the rolls up-to-date and free from defects. Shri Sayanak attended this meeting but did not complain about anything except that care should be taken to include the names of all eligible voters. It therefore appears that his above allegation of collusion between congress workers and the office of the Tahsildar, Belgaum is not correct No information is known here regarding the alleged collusion of congressmen with taluk office.

Every person included in the electoral roll has the competence to object to the inclusion of one or more names in the electoral rolls. In the instant case, in Belgaum no names have been struck off from the rolls as a result of the objection petitions. As such further action seems unnecessary.

PROGRAMME FOR THE CRASH REVISION OF ELECTORAL ROLLS OF THE NEWLY DELIMITED 224 ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES, 1975.

1. Publication of the existing rolls in terms of the newly delimited constituencies as draft rolls on— 1-1-1975
2. Last date for lodging claims and objections to the draft rolls — 16-1-1975
3. Commencement of house-to-house enumeration by enumerating staff — 1-1-1975
4. Completion of house-to-house enumeration — 16-1-1975
5. Last date for completion of check and verification by supervisory staff.— 19-1-1975
6. Last date for completion of check and verification by Electoral Registration Officers and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers. — 21-1-1975
7. Last date for preparation of statements under rule 21 & 21(A) of Registration of Electors rules, 1960 and publication of the statements in the manuscript itself. — 25-1-1975
8. Last date upto which the above statements will be exhibited. — 1-2-1975
9. Last date upto which claims and objections in respect of the above stetaments will be received. — 3-2-1975
10. Last date for disposal of claims and objections received both for the draft list and for the lists under rules 21 and 21 (A) of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, — 10-2-1975
11. Last date for completion of printing of integrated supplement of inclusions, deletions and corretions after manuscript preparations. — 27-2-1975
12. Date for final publication of the rolls (*i.e.*, basic roll plus integrated lists of amendments). — 28-2-1975

2-30 P.M.

SRI. B.B SAYANAK — From the very beginning I was urging for the appointment of Kannada and Marathi Enumerators. In spite of my demand, they have appointed only Kannada Enumerators on 1-1-1975. When we wrote to the Chief Election Commissioner, New Delhi, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister of the Govt. of India, they appointed Marathi Enumerators. When the work was in progress, the Kannada Enumerators did not take the help of the Marathi Enumerators and thus they have omitted the Houses of Marathi people. It was admitted by the Chief Electoral Officer and

he gave instructions to his office to set right matters. The Belgaum is the only City in India a ter independence where in 4000 objection have been taken by some persons One Dr. Khot who is 75, is issued the notice of age doubtful one Nafekar who is retired Government Servant also issued notice It is the systematic plan of this Government to reduce the Marathi voters. With the help of Kannada peoples My submission to the Chair is this; 20 persons have filed ob ections and out of 20, 7 persons have withdrawn their objection and they have charged the officers for this objections. They said that it is the office which has done this mischief. If this is the case, may I ask the Government when these 20 persons have taken objection and nobody as come forward to prodnce their evidence, whether the Government is going to take any action against those person? Is this the way of giving justice to the Marathi people? I want to know whether the Minister is going to take any action agaist these 20 persons?

SRI D K. NAIKAR.— The allegation made by the Hon. member is not correct. That has been completely denied by officers. The point that has been raised by the Hon. member that 20 persons belonging to the Congress Party have submitted objections in respect of the names of the Marathi people, is not correct.

SRI B.B. SAYANAK.— I will give you the names of the person who have filed the objections.

SRI D.K. NAIKAR — I may inform the Hon. member that this is the procedure that has to be followed by an officer who is designated as Electoral Officer. He has to receive objection filed by every voter. If in the course of receiving such objections, the names of Marathi people go out, then I am helpless. He may attribute a motive but I may inform him that it is motiveless.

As regards taking action against the persons who have purposely filed these objections, I have no reason to take any action against them because their objections have been dispose of in accordance with the due process of law and the names of all the persons have been included. There is nothing there for us to take action.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SRI BACHI REDDY-GRANT OF

MADAM SPEAKER.—I have received a letter from Sri Bachi Reddy requesting permission to remain absent from the current sitting of the Assembly due to ill health.

It is the pleasure of the House to grant permission to remain absent?

HON. MEMBERS.— Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER.— Sri Bachi Reddy is granted permission to remain absent during the current sittings of the Legislature.